

News

Gypsy threat: We'll bomb bailiffs



Looming clashes ... travellers at the site in Crays Hill, Essex, will be evicted

THE stage was set for a bloody showdown last night when gypsies vowed to "bomb" bailiffs sent to evict them.

The travellers currently living on the UK's biggest illegal green belt camp in Essex face eviction after the local council voted overwhelmingly in favour of kicking them out.

In response defiant members of the 500-strong traveller community occupying Dale Farm camp in Crays Hill, near Billericay, threatened to "bomb, gas and burn" bailiffs sent in to spearhead the £18million eviction.

The travellers accuse Basildon Council of "ethnic cleansing".

Cops fear violent clashes at the site — which has featured on Channel 4's Big Fat Gypsy Weddings series — if the threats are carried out and anti-capitalist groups such as the Wombles join the resistance.

The eviction could last as long as two months.

Basildon Council decided to send in the bulldozers by 28 votes to ten.

But defiant mum-of-two Nora Goretwo said she would not go without a fight.

She said: "We will bomb them, we will gas them, we will burn them if we have to but we are going to fight.

"We are not going to go. I am going to chain myself to the railings and if that doesn't work we have got a few more tricks up our sleeves.

"They will have to murder our children to get them to leave, they will have to murder us. We are not going to lay down our cards and leave."

Tony Ball, leader of the Conservative-run council, told the meeting: "Wrong is wrong.

"There cannot be one rule for one and another rule for others. The law of this land must be upheld, it's a national duty to make sure this is done.

"Our overarching duty is to uphold the law of the land. What price for law and order. The green belt needs to be protected."

Travellers occupied the greenbelt site — next to a legal gypsy camp — in 2001, leading to a ten-year legal battle with the council.

Grassland was covered in Tarmac and the site littered with rubbish.

Local villagers in Crays Hill — now outnumbered by the travellers — said they felt like they lived in a "cursed village", citing death threats, intimidation and abuse.

The council — in financial difficulty thanks to budget cuts — had set aside £1 million to re-home the travellers but they said they had a "cultural aversion" to bricks and mortar.

Len Gridley, a property developer who lives next to the camp, said: "The travellers have had plenty of time - they have had all these years to find alternative homes. I've lost track of all the excuses.

"I would give them 28 days to leave and that's it, the village is not going to tolerate them staying. We will continue to fight in every way possible. If the police can't go in there, they should send the army."

He added: "They plead poverty but they are driving around in brand new motors, they should have their assets seized to pay for the eviction."

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